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Message Text

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43
ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 FRB-03

OPIC-03 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 L-03 /075 W
---------- 117446
R 071440Z AUG 75
FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4207
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NOUAKCHOTT 1600

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EFIN EINV MR
SUBJECT: BIMA EXPATRIATE OFFICIALS PERMITTED TO LEAVE MAURITANIA

REF: A. NOUAKCHOTT 422 B. NOUAKCHOTT 1105 C. NOUAKCHOTT 1241

1. FORMER MANAGER OF BANQUE INTERNATIONALE POUR L'AFRIQUE OCCIDENTALE (BIAO/BIMA), WHO HAS BEEN "DETAINED" IN MAURITANIA SINCE FEBRUARY SEQUESTRATION OF BIMA, AND HIS SWISS WIFE WERE QUIETLY PERMITTED TO DEPART MAURITNIA PERMANENTLY THREE WEEKS AGO. GIRM HAD INITIATED PERSONAL CRIMINAL ACTION AGAINST BIMA MANAGER (WHO IS FRENCH NATINAL) AT SAME TIME IT INITIATED LEGAL ACTION AGAINST BANK FOR ALLEDGED VIOLATIONS OF EXCHANGE CONTROLS. BOTH ACTIONS STEMMED FROM GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO FORCE REPATRIATION OF 20 MILLION DOLLARS THAT SOCIETE DES MINES DE FER DE MAURITANIE (MIFERMA) REPORTEDLY EARNED DURING TWO TO THREE MONTHS IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO NOVEMBER 1974 NATIONALIZATION. WHILE PROFESSIONAL FUTURE OF FORMER MANAGER IS UNCERTAIN (WHETHER CONTINUED EMPLOYMENT WITH BIA OR WITH NEW BANK), HE WAS DEFINITE THAT HE WOULD NOT BE RETURNING TO MAURITANIA.

2. AFTER KEEPING THREE OF THE OTHER EIGHT EXPATRIATES ON BIMA STAFF GUESSING SINCE APRIL, GIRM HAS NOW PER-
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MITTED ONE TO DEPART PERMANENTLY AT END OF FIXED CON-

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TRACT PERIOD AND TWO TO DEPART FOR VACATION. AMERICAN
ATTORNEY REPRESENTING FIRST NATIONAL CITY (AND FOR ALL
PRACTICAL PRUPOSES BIAO) DURING VISIT TO NOUAKCHOTT
IN MAY ATTEMPTED TO IMPRESS UPON ACTING MANAGER AP-
POINTED BY CENTRAL BANK CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF ALLOWING
EXPATRIATE STAFF TO DEPART ON SCHEDULE. ATTORNEY
UNDERSCORED ADVERSE IMPACT FORCED PROLONGATION OF
SOJOURNS OF EXPATRIATES WOULD HAVE ON ATTEMPTS
BY BIAO OR BY CENTRAL BANK ITSELF TO RECRUIT FOREIGN
BANKING TECHNICIANS REQUIRED TO MAKE BIMA FUNCTION.

3. COMMENT: FACT THAT GIRM HAS RESCINDED COUNTRY
DETENTION OF FORMER BIMA MANAGER AND HAS ALLOWED HIM
AND OTHER EXPATRIATES TO LEAVE MAURITANIA, SUGGESTS
THAT GOVERNMENT HAS RECOGNIZED (A) ESSENTIALITY OF
EXPATRIATE BANKING TECHNICIANS FOR CONTINUED FUNCTION-
ING OFBIMA; AND (B) IMPOSSIBILITY OF RECRUITING
ADDITIONAL EXPATRIATES SO LONG AS CENTRAL BANK AND/OR
GIRM IS TWISTING ARMS OF THOSE ALREADY HERE. (GOVERN-
MENT HAD ALREADY RECOGNIZED THAT CONTINUED FUNCTIONING
OF BIMA IS ESSENTIAL TO MAURITANIAN BANKRDG SYSTEM.)
IF IT LESS CLEAR WHAT RECENT ACTION IMPLIES FOR NE-
GOTIATED SETTLEMENT OF BIAO/BIMA DISPUTE.

4. FOR PARIS: SUGGEST YOU BRIEF MCGOVERN AND WOOD
ON ABOVE AND IN PROCESS ASCERTAIN HOW THEY SEE CURRENT
SITUATION AND WHETHER FIRST NATIONAL CITY OR BIAO
PLANS TAKE ANY NEW INITIATIVES.SHINN

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